

Taking the bus – 1

Scenario

Your character is riding on a bus. Someone sits down next to her who's wearing really smelly aftershave and picks his nose for the whole ride.

Questions

Write the answer to these questions. You don't have to use complete sentences. If possible, write the answers as part of a scene that may be in your finished story. As you write these snippets, always consider why your character makes these choices. What compels her to make this choice, as opposed to another? What is going on in her life or her past history that drives her to make these choices or take these actions? What colors her interpretation of the events?

Is this your character's first time riding the bus?

First time riding this particular bus?

Is she a regular on this bus?

Where is she going?

- Is she commuting to work?
- Is she going out of town?
- Visiting someone?

Is it a one-time thing?

Why is she taking the bus?

- Is she taking the bus because her car's in the shop?
- She missed her car pool?
- She doesn't want to drive to her end destination? Why?

Does the guy who sits next to her rustle his paper really loudly as if he's pissed off that he has to ride the bus?

What does his aftershave remind your character of?

Does it give her a headache?

Does she move to avoid the smell?

Does she have to stay in her seat because the bus is full so she can't move?

How does she feel about the situation?

Does it bring up any specific memory or feeling for your character?

How does she deal with the situation?

Does she fantasize about shooting the guy if he rattles his paper just one more time?

Does she even notice because she has too much on her mind?

- If so, what's on her mind?

What's the weather doing?

- Does it impact traffic and the ride in?

Does the weather and driving conditions make the bus late?

Does she mind?

Does she notice?

What goes on in her mind during the ride?

What does she notice on the bus?

What does she *not* notice during the bus ride?

Finally

What does this experience bring up for your character? Any *specific* memory or emotion? Does the ride or anything that happens on the bus change anything for your character?

Choices

Your character always has choices. What choices does she make at each junction and why?

Think of your current story

How can you use this in your story?

Next

Do this exercise for the each of your characters.